

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**

**PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION**

**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**SUBJECT: HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED  
BY THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, good morning. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the Air Force's experience with managing its historic properties through its cultural resources conservation program. First, I must remind you that our FY02 budget is still under development, as part of the Secretary's strategic review. That budget, when complete, will include funding to cover the Department's most pressing priorities. I ask that you consider my comments in that light.

The Air Force owns over 1,200 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and we estimate that we have nearly 3,000 properties eligible for the National Register. We inherited some of our most historic properties from the Army, such as the Fort D. A. Russell National Historic Landmark at Francis E. Warren AFB, Wyoming. Others reflect the proud, albeit relatively recent history of the Air Force, such as the Cape Canaveral Historic District, where America's manned space program began, or the inspiring architecture of the Cadet Chapel at the Air Force Academy. The Air Force takes seriously its responsibilities for the management of its historic properties under the National Historic Preservation Act. Our historic properties contribute a deep sense of place and heritage to Air Force people as well as to the general public. The importance of our historic properties, their management, maintenance, and repair must be carefully factored into the Air Force's larger goal of successful execution of mission requirements, productivity, quality of life and retention. With over 111,000 total buildings in the Air Force inventory, we must ensure maintenance and repair funds are used wisely and most effectively.

When I last addressed the issue of the Air Force's historic properties before this Committee in October 1999 I stated that the maintenance of our historic buildings was proportionate to that for the remainder of our building inventory. We continue to believe this is true. With only 5.1 percent of our non-housing buildings now eligible for or listed on the National Register, their maintenance consumes about 4.7 percent of our total Real Property Maintenance (RPM) budget. It should be noted, however, that there are additional requirements associated with the management of historic properties. These include the inventory of buildings and their evaluation for eligibility to the National Register, the preparation of installation cultural resources management plans, and mitigation costs that may be associated with the disposal of a historic property. Once determined eligible for listing, the preparation of a nomination package is an additional requirement. We do not maintain separate accounting for all expenses associated with the inventory, assessment, and nomination of our historic properties, including archaeological sites.

The Air Force does not allocate Real Property Maintenance funds specifically for maintenance of historic facilities. The current Real Property Maintenance budget supports all facilities without regard for age or historical designation. We develop our budget for sustainment and life cycle repair using DOD's Facility Sustainment Model. Within this model, historic properties do not carry a special or distinct designation. Instead, historic buildings, like all others, are assigned category codes based on the function of the facility itself. In other words, a historic facility used to house administrative functions has the same code as a similar non-historic facility. Under this model historic facilities "earn" the same sustainment funding (on a square footage basis) as a non-historic facility.

This level of sustainment funding is consistent with our level of spending to maintain historic housing. One percent of the family housing inventory is on the National Register of Historic Places. Analysis of FY95 to FY99 data indicates we spend an average of 1.2% of the annual Military Family Housing Operations and Maintenance budget on these historic units, so the cost to maintain historic housing is proportionate to what we spend on the remainder of our housing inventory. The Air Force also has an additional 1,232 houses which are eligible, but have not been placed on, the National Register of Historic Places. We have not conducted a study to quantify maintenance costs for housing units that are only eligible, but not on, the National Register of Historic Place, but we have no reason to believe those costs are disproportionate.

We agree with the Army and Navy conclusion that the cost per square foot for operations and maintenance of historic units is the same or less than non-historic units. However, while the life-cycle cost to maintain historic and non-historic homes is comparable, the cost to renovate and restore historic homes can be higher. The majority of the increased costs are due to the requirements to comply with historical property agreements and to maintain architectural compatibility. For example, installation of slate roofing is much more expensive than the use of composite shingles. However, as cited in the Corps of Engineer's report on historical buildings, "The projected life of new slate roof exceeds that of a composition roof by four to five times, making the slate roof the best economic option for a roof material, in spite of its initial costs, or the historic status of the building." The Corps' report also hit the nail on the head when it noted that insufficient funding to properly maintain all our housing inventory, not just historical homes, has resulted in deferral of prudent work which, in turn, leads to greater future expense.

We have published an Air Force Family Housing Master Plan and are developing a General Officers Quarters Master Plan to guide all of our future housing investments. Integral to the master planning process, professional engineers and architects accomplish independent assessments and estimates to accurately determine the cost to revitalize and maintain our units to meet standards. These plans insure the most cost-effective manner is used to renovate, maintain, and preserve our historic units. By following these road maps we will insure the necessary investments are programmed to meet our historical needs.

In response to direction from Congress and the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations, the Air Force has formed a Historic Facilities Integrated Process Team. The purpose of this team is to develop innovative initiatives and future plans that can help reduce costs and improve maintenance of historic properties. We intend to improve our historic preservation compliance procedures and guidance with the assistance of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and will strengthen our already strong partnership with the State Historic Preservation Offices.

In some cases, the disposal or transfer of historic properties is the best approach from both operational and fiscal perspectives. Following the consultation requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we have already disposed or transferred ownership of a number of historic properties. These include transfer of the Delta 01/Delta 09 Minuteman II Missile complex at Ellsworth AFB, SD, to the National Park Service to form the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site; the transfer of a Titan II Launch facility near Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, to a non-profit organization to maintain as a museum; the transfer of ownership

of a historic hangar at McConnell AFB, KS, to the City of Wichita; and the transfer of ownership of a historic Red Cross building at F. E. Warren AFB for relocation off the base.

In summary, we do not believe the cost of maintenance of historic properties is disproportionate to that for comparable non-historic properties. Looking to the future, we are cooperating with the Defense Department and the other Services to ensure fiscally prudent and technically sound management of our historic properties.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. Thank you.